Technical Assistance
In
Proposal Writing

Presented By
Butte County Children and Families Commission

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How to write a winning Proposal

Knowing what funders want and how to deliver it.
Reproduction of an article by Jennifer Brooks

About half of all federal and foundation grant proposals are rejected because they are poorly organized or they don't conform to the Request for Proposal's (RFP) guidelines. True, there are never enough funds to go around. But the difference between a winning and losing proposal can be as simple as being organized, understanding what the funder really wants, and knowing how to sell your organization.

Failing to prepare is preparing to fail

Without careful planning and organization, many proposal writers can overlook details or misunderstand larger issues laid out in the RFP. If you are organizationally challenged, here are a few suggestions to help you write that winning proposal.

- Carefully read and analyze the RFP and then make an honest decision about applying.
- Develop a checklist of everything that is being asked on the RFP.
- Develop your strategy and key selling points.
- Make a schedule for yourself.
- Do your research. Use the funding agency as a resource. Some agencies accept drafts for review.
- Be sure to follow an outline or the steps laid out in the RFP.
- Design your program including time and budget. Take time to verify your data.
- Write your first draft. Make sure your proposal is a cohesive piece even if different people worked on it.
- Review and revise as many times as necessary. Don't be afraid to let an outside reader give you feedback.
- Write your cover letter and executive summary.
- Prepare appendices/attachments.
- Submit proposal on time.

Generally, proposals are due 30 to 60 days after the RFP is announced. Don't wait for the announcement to start working on your proposal. "It's very important that a grant writer be selected and ready prior to the grant announcement," said Mike DuBose, MSW, president of Research Associates, a proposal-writing firm in Columbia, South Carolina. "Otherwise there will be a heavy focus on slapping something together at the last minute with lots of confusion and disorganization."

Understanding what funders want

RFPs can often be confusing. Sometimes it's difficult to understand exactly what is being requested and why. **Nonetheless, the most important rule in developing a proposal is to follow the RFP to the "tee"**. No matter how difficult this may be, the RFP is your most important source of information. It outlines the information according to how the grantor plans to review it. "We definitely consider those that are well written and follow all the steps in the RFP", said Miriam Liepold, program officer at the Community Foundation for the National Capital Region in Washington, D.C.

Carefully go over the RFP with your checklist, as many times as necessary until you feel that you fully understand all that is being asked. The checklist should encompass everything ranging from the problem to task assignments to delivery due dates. Proposals that are incomplete, too long, or do not adhere to the instructions will likely be returned as non-conforming. "You'd be surprised how many people don't include the correct number of copies and supporting documents when submitting their proposal," said Liepold. "They think it's okay to just to submit the original proposal.'

Don't jump to conclusions. If you have a question regarding the RFP, it's better to pick up the phone and call the grantor. RFPs usually provide contact names and numbers of grantors willing to answer questions.

The following are general points that should be demonstrated in any winning proposal:

- The project's goal is clearly stated and will address the identified community's needs and the program's purpose.
- The project is culturally competent.
- The work plan and strategies are feasible, realistic, and logically sequenced.
- The project can be monitored and evaluated.
- The project will result in specific outcomes.
- The staff and organization are qualified to do the job.
- The project is deemed necessary by the community.
- The budget is realistic.

Develop a winning strategy

A winning strategy should be clear, logical, and effective. In formulating a strategy, you should consider the approach you will take in solving the problem (as spelled out in the RFP). Then you will have to determine the methods you will employ, the resources you will need, costs, and time, plus any creative or innovative ideas – things that weren't mentioned in the RFP.

If you are competing with other organizations for funding, this is the time to show what your organization offers that others don't. Market yourself. No one will know how qualified for the job your organization is unless you tell them.

The body of the proposal

Obviously, RFPs differ as programs and community needs differ. Each foundation has a different focus and interest. One thing you shouldn't do is design a program you can't carry out in an effort to fit the RFP requirements.

Grant reviewers place emphasis on different criteria, depending on the nature of the program. Some funders may emphasize staffing for a specific project, while others may place emphasis somewhere else. Every RFP should clearly lay out the criteria by which your proposal will be judge. Again, if the review criterion is not clear to you, call the grantor directly.

The following example lists the basic questions addressed in most proposals.

1) Establishing the need. Demonstrate a clear understanding of the problem within the community or population at which the program is targeted. Your material should be based on your needs assessment. Remember that you need to answer the basic Who? What? Where? When? And How?
2) Goals and objectives. What will your project accomplish based on the assessed community needs? What route will you take to meet the community's needs?
3) Work plan and strategy. What are the specific methods involved in the project? What are the process and the target population? How will the project be managed and staffed? The work plan should always match the objectives.
4) Evaluation. How will the results be measure and the project evaluated?

Writing the proposal

Effective grant writing is a talent that is a result of many years of diverse expertise, education and creativity. It is a very complex and tedious task. For a project to get funded, every aspect of the proposal must be nearly perfect. Each component is so important that the grant proposal is like an engine, if just one little item is slightly off, it can malfunction.

It is extremely important to follow an outline so that your material is organized. After looking over 40 proposals, reviewers usually need to look back at certain sections to refresh their memories. Make your information hard to find, and you'll end up frustrating someone and knocking yourself out of the running.

Remember, a well-written proposal is one that is clear in though, logical in structure and organization, and concise. The writer should display fluid movement of ideas, paying attention to stylistic consistency. There are several style manuals available that should be followed throughout the document. And finally, any winning proposal should look professional, be free from jargon, typographical, grammatical, or mathematical errors, and be submitted on time.

If you want to see examples of past winning proposals, contact the federal agency or foundation involved. Under the Freedom of Information Act the public can review all open-bid proposals.

SOME CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE YOU BEGIN

The program description for proposals to the Butte County Children and Families Commission should focus on what is called for in the Request for Proposals (RFP) and should address one of the Priority Areas of Children are born and remain healthy and well nourished, Children are ready to enter school and progress successfully, or families are nurturing and supportive in their children's social and emotional health. No proposals will be accepted for priority area number two, early care and education providers are competent, qualified, and remain in the profession, at this time as it has been fully funded through project REWARD. It is strongly advised that those who will be submitting a proposal for funding ready the following documents carefully:

- Butte County Children and Families Commission Strategic Plan revised in November 2003;
- Request for Proposals released on January 20, 2004;
- Questions and Answers of the January 30, 2004 Proposers Conference, which may be found on the Commission website at **www.ccfc.ca.gov/butte**.

All of these documents are available on the Butte County Children and Families Commission web site: **www.ccfc.ca.gov/butte**.

After you prepare the proposal ask yourself these questions:

- Does the proposal clearly address focus areas and objectives listed in the Butte County Children and Families Commission Strategic Plan?
- Does the proposal promote integrated, coordinated, accessible service systems for children 0-5 and their families?
- Will the proposal increase the ability of Butte County children and families to better obtain services?
- Will those services allow them to live better lives, be healthier and have a stronger family life?

Writing Issues: Be Kind to the Reader

- **Follow the RFP format.** The application reviewers use a scoring sheet that follows the sections and questions in the order that they appear in the RFP. If a reviewer has to search for your information, he or she will be less disposed to give you a top score.
- **Have a third party ready your proposal** when you have finished writing it. If someone who knows little or nothing about your project – like your mother or Aunt Tilly – can understand what it is you want to do and how that will lead to the results you expect, then the reviewer will probably understand it too. Be sure to have your reader look for spelling and grammar errors.
- **Use the active voice** instead of passive voice when possible. In active voice the subject of the sentence does the verb action. Example:

  Active: **"**The Jungle School parent group will remodel the playground at…"
  Passive: "The playground will be remodeled by…"
- **Avoid the use of personal pronouns** (our, we, I). Use nouns, such as program staff, program participants, teachers, etc.
- **Use plain English – Not "**these results will not be measured directly through the context of this project but instead through increased program accessibility, availability and quality, which will most likely take time to develop." **Instead** "The project director will conduct a baseline survey of 50 parents in July, and with the same parents again in January and May to learn if parents have noticed changes in service availability, access or quality." (If Aunt Tilly can understand it – the reviewer can understand it!)
- **Break up overly long sentences or paragraphs.** The sentence above might become, "The project director will conduct a baseline survey to identify parent's attitudes about service

availability, access or quality. The director will survey 50 parents in July, January and May and compare results."

- **Define new terms when you first use them.** "Super Kids (SKs) is a group of local teenagers who volunteer two hours per week helping in a pre-school. Two youths from SKs will go to other schools to recruit…" If there are groups whose names sound similar, consider spelling them out each time to avoid confusion.
- **Avoid phrases such as "It is important that", or "It is the best way."** These phrases do not convey information or data.
- **References and citations:** Avoid overuse and misuse of quotes. Use author's last name and year of publication at the end of the sentence before the period. Example: "Secondhand smoke causes 30% of heart disease" (Glantz & Parmley, 1994). Cite references at the end of the section or document using author's name, year, title of publication and page number.

Writing an Abstract

- An Abstract is sometimes called an Executive Summary. It is an overview of the need and the proposal. It should be written LAST, after you have finished writing the proposal and fully developed your objectives, activities and evaluation measures.
- It should be no longer than one page.
- Should be written with some "Punch." The reader should be left with the feeling that there is no doubt that the project addresses an important problem and should feel curious about wanting to read more about it.
- Start with a description of the problem. Do not use statistics. Example: "Child obesity is a major cause of adult chronic disease."
- Describe the significance of what the project will do at the grass roots level to address the problem. State why the project is important.
- Describe the target population briefly and what the expected outcomes will be. State what changes in behavior, knowledge or attitude are expected.
- State the budget amount.
- State the length of the program.

Developing a Needs Statement

Definition

A process by which the program planner identifies and measures gaps between what is and what out to be. (Windsor et al, 1994).

A planned process that identifies the reported needs of an individual or group (Gilmore & Campbell, 1996).

In the first definition a program planner identifies needs of people, and in the second the people identified their own needs. Both types of needs are important, and if either is ignored, the true need may be misunderstood. A program planned for others may not interest the target population even though a real problem may exist. A program planned only from the point of view of the target group may not solve the real problem. A needs statement should reflect both perspectives.

A good needs statement may help more clearly identify the target population's age, gender, behaviors, attitudes or knowledge.

Finding Needs Assessment Data

Primary data are pieces of information the planner collects or has collected about the need. These data are specific to the target population, but collecting them can take time. Secondary data are data available from other sources. Secondary data take less time to collect, but they might not exactly represent the needs of the target population, or may be old.

Primary data are collected from individuals through surveys or interviews, either one time, or several periods over time. Or, they can be collected through surveying or interviewing significant other of the target population, such as spouses, family members, or friends. Or they can be collected through interviewing or surveying or community opinion leaders who are well respected by the target group and who have an overall view of its needs. Sometimes primary data are collected in a group setting where participants answer specific written questions. Other ways to collect primary data include focus groups or observation.

Secondary data sources include government agencies (local, state and Federal), U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of Census, National Center for Health Statistics (part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or CDC).

Community Profile

- The "community" being addressed in community profile means the group or groups of people the project is targeting for change. The community could be parents, children, providers of any type. (It doesn't have to be children or parents alone, but could be other people who interact or serve parents and children). Put down as much information as you can that would identify the group or groups clearly: language, culture, age, family structure, educational or income level, occupations, or any other data that would help identify them as a separate group to be targeted (teen parents, recent immigrants, etc).

- Clearly state the number(s) in the group(s) to be reached.
- Also identify in which communities (geographic areas) services will be delivered or which communities will be impacted.

  Example: Outreach workers will go door-to-door in the 995 and 996 zip code areas (low-income areas where many target population families live). Outreach programs will be offered at large employers located in zip code 990 where one-third of the employees are Spanish-speaking.

  Example: The project administration office will be located in Newtown. The project outreach office will be located in the migrant housing office in Fruitvale. The office will be open for 15 hours per week in late afternoon and early evening to allow parents to sign up or attend language or reading groups.

Objectives

Planning Objectives may relate to collecting (increasing) data or resources. The emphasis is on obtaining baseline data for planning future interventions. Example:

> By May, 2002, the nurse and principal of Shady Creek School will review records of former kindergartners who had not met entry requirements or had not registered before the start of school to learn characteristics that might have contributed, such as language or educational level of parents, length of time in area, parent occupation, number of children in family, address, distance from school, etc.

Another part of Planning might be to develop collaboration with other community programs and resources that relate to the type of work you intend to do. This is a good way to begin exploring way to integrate the way your program delivers its services with other programs in the community. Example:

> By June, 2002, a collaborative of public health nurses, the hospital administrator, early childcare providers, pre-school directors, staff of the Shady Creek School, school nurses, and parents will have met three times to develop a community education campaign about the importance of immunizations and will plan two immunization clinics for children entering kindergarten.

One more example of a Planning Objective is the development of tools to help the project meet its goals, such as creating a database for collecting information and sharing information with other projects and the community. Example:

> By June 2003, the XYZ Resource Center will create a database that tracks available licensed childcare slots in the county.

Outcome Objectives are future-oriented and are related to measurable or observable change. An outcome objective states the results one hopes to attain by carrying out planned intervention activities. In general, most objectives plan to increase or decrease something.

Outcomes may be achieve in the short-term, such as increasing the number of children who are enrolled in subsidized pre-school programs, or they may measure more long-term changes in the population, such as improved results in school achievement tests.

There are many types of measurable objectives. The following list describes some of these:

- **Behavioral objectives** describe behavior or actions, which certain people or a group will take toward achieving an overall outcome. Behavioral objective must answer the following questions: Who are the people that are expected to change? What are the changes in behaviors that are being sought? How much of the behavior is expected to be achieved? When is the behavior expected to occur? Example:

  By the first day of school, 2004, at least 98% of entering kindergartners will be up-to-date on immunizations; at least 95% of children will have received a health check-up. At least 90% of children will have received a dental checkup. (These might be written this way because there are fewer dental resources than clinic or physician resources.)

- **Learning Objectives** relate to knowledge (just as behavioral objectives relate to behavior). Examples:

  By January 2002, at least 95% of parent leaders, school nurse, outreach workers, kindergarten teachers, aides and principal at Shady Creek School will be able to state kindergarten entry requirements, list reasons why children frequently are not prepared for school entry, identify parental barriers, list steps he/she can take to assist parents, and identify services provided at which local health care providers.

  By June 30, 2002, twenty-five parents and caregivers will increase their knowledge about child safety as a result of participation in a parent education class, as measured by pre- and post-tests.

Environmental Objectives relate to how changes in the environment will help achieve the desired outcomes. People usually do not act a certain way (behave) just because of whom they are, but they do so because they interact with a particular environment. Here's an example:

By June 30, 2001, the program director will sign an MOU with the school food services manager to serve healthy snacks at least 90% of the time, in accordance with the American Dietetic Guidelines for School Food Services.

Why so many types of objectives?

Objectives are related to outcomes. Several objectives may be needed to accomplish one outcome. Many different types of people need to be targeted for change if the change is to be sustained. There may be times when the same objective supports multiple outcomes. For example, implementing a parent education class may support outcomes related to strong families, healthy children and improved systems.

Writing Outcome Objectives

The Butte County Children and Families Commission (BCCFC) RFP requires that Objectives answer the following questions:

- What is the timeline for achieving this outcome?
- How many individuals will be changes?
- What is the change that will be measured?
- What tool will be used to measure the change?
- Who will collect and analyze the data?

Writing specific and measurable outcome objectives take time, clear thinking and a realistic understanding of what the program can achieve. Key questions to consider when writing include:

- Who or what is expected to change or benefit?
  Example: Injuries that happen to children who attend a child care center.
- What/how much change or benefit is expected?
  Example: a 15% reduction in injuries to children.
- Where will the change occur?
  Example: On the playground of Super Kids Child Care Center in Responsiblityville, California
- When will the change occur?
  Example: By June 30, 2004.
- How will you know if change occurred and who will be responsible for measuring the change?
  Example: The occurrence of injuries for all 60 children attending the Super Kids Playground in Responsibilityville will be reduced 15% by June 30, 2004 from a baseline of 120 injuries/60 children (measured in 2000) to 102/60 children as measured by playground injury logs kept by the project director.
- Is the planned change observable or measurable? Can you see, count, hear, smell or otherwise observe or measure the change?
- Is the planned change achievable or reachable? A baseline measure will assist you in estimating the level of success you might expect to achieve. (A baseline measure can be defined as the status of something before any activities intended to change anything begin.) Decide whether your planned intervention is realistic by considering baseline measurements as well as using you knowledge and experience. Be realistic. Don't overestimate the likely change. For example, an outcome objective of 50 may be unrealistic if at baseline 100% of children have 5 or more injuries per year. Aim for small changes over time. If you don't know the baseline or current level, you may not be able to estimate how much change is realistically achievable. Or, you can write your objective and state: "Percent of change is an estimate and may change following the assessment of baseline or current levels."

- Is the change important or meaningful? Even if achievable, an outcome may not be sufficiently meaningful and important to be justified. If at the beginning of your intervention 98% of the playground injuries are insignificant ones, spending two years to reduce those by 10% may not be worth the effort. One-way to determine important or meaningful is to apply the "who cares" test. For example, if the injuries that occur are serious, require medical care or require parents to leave work, and are frequent, then having fewer serious injuries would be important. Children, parents, child-care worker, insurance companies would all care about that. There are no hard and fast rules. Consider the required financial and human resource investments required for the outcomes, and the benefits that various stakeholders will be received.

Project Activities

The application narrative must describe a series of Activities that will support the proposed objectives. These Activities help to establish stable program characteristics related to the provision of services, resources needed to implement the project, or the physical or organizational setting in which the project takes place. The Activities must be included in the narrative to show the administrative and programmatic elements of the project that will provide a strong foundation for tracking the progress of the project's implementation.

Provide a clear and succinct narrative describing the following:

- Describe what services will be provided, where they will be provided and how often the services will be provided.
- How many people will be reached? Be specific as to the number of adults and children who will be served over the life of the project.
- If the project requires a planning phase (longer than the usual project start-up time), provide a description of the major activities in both the planning and implementation stages of the project.
- Describe how the project will respond to the specific needs of the program participants.
- How will you conduct outreach to promote the program and increase the likelihood of participation by the targeted group(s)?

Examples of Project Activities:

Objective: By first day of school, 2004, at least 98% of entering kindergartners will b up-to-date on immunizations.
Activities: (This is an abbreviated list and should be written in narrative form in the proposal):

- Determine the number of children who need immunizations and what type by conducting a baseline survey of parents of entering kindergarteners.
- Develop partnerships with ABC community clinic, XYYZ hospital and local school administrators to plan free immunization clinics.
- Conduct outreach in Spanish and English through local media channel.
- Conduct four free immunization clinics.
- Compare the number of children immunized and the number of immunizations given by type to the baseline survey. Survey parents whose children were immunized about their

satisfaction with the service. Survey people who staffed the clinics to determine their satisfaction with the planning and service delivery.

*If you have not used all of the allowed page length for your narrative, you may want to include a table that lists the activities under each objective, however this is not required.

Collaboration and Service Integration

Developing collaboration among service providers in the community is a key component of Proposition 10 and the Commission will work to provide opportunities for projects to work together.

As the proposal is being developed, begin thinking about the key partners you will need to make the program the best that it can be. An outstanding program plan will address ways that the services will be made accessible to the people the proposal is targeting. Some questions to consider when the plan is being developed are:

- How will people (the target population and the community at large) know about the program?
- How will people access the services? Will they come to the program? Will the program go to the target population? Are there transportation issues? What will make people want to participate in the program or service? Are there language barriers? Cultural issues?
- Who is doing similar work in the community with the same target group?
- Who is doing work that will complement what the project is doing or provide the program with a way to reach the target population?
- Who are potential partners that might want to work with this program?
- Is there anyone who should be invited to the table who is not already here?
- What roles can our partners play in this project?
- What roles can be played in other projects?
- How does the work this project is doing build on the assets in the community?

Include in the appendices a Letter of Commitment from each organization that will be receiving grant funds or providing match cash or in-kind, signed by an individual authorized to bind the agency. Use the "fill in the blanks" Letter of Commitment (attachment 6).

Applicant Capability

Most funders want to know whether the applicant has had experience on similar projects that would contribute to successful completion of this project. It's important to respond to the questions asked in this section of the RFP, not skip over any questions, nor be too general in responding. Review the funding agency's strategic plan and the plan's objectives. Describe past or current experience in working on similar or related objectives, experience with the target population, with diverse cultural and language needs, and with service integration. Give examples of prior accomplishments (or current projects) related to the purpose of the RFA. Describe what the applicant provided in the way of products or deliverables (curriculum, reports, services, evaluation) in a timely fashion, and ability to manage, coordinate and monitor the project.

Example: In 1999-2000 the XYZ agency collaborated with the ABC school to increase kindergarten attendance. Parents, educators and agency representatives formed a multi-cultural, multilingual committee. Parent-teacher teams visited 88% of K parents to explain the importance of school attendance, listen to parents' needs, discuss the child's status in class work and development, and refer to available services. Attendance increased by 16% within 2 months. All parties signed an agreement about roles, and responsibilities. Agencies contributed funds for home visit mileage and child-care while parents attended committee meetings. Parents who donated time received credits which their child could redeem for school supplies donated by nearby stores Pre-post surveys of parents and team members conducted by the district staff development department showed a significant increase in feelings of mutual respect and teamwork. They presented a report to the school board in December 2000, before budget hearings began in January. Committee members obtained permission for remaining funds to be used for start the next year. The Board agreed to continue funding. The committee found toothache was a common reason for school absence. The committee and board members agreed to approach the dental society about collaborating to increase dental access.

Describe how the project will be staffed. Will experienced staff be reassigned? Give their names, titles and experience. Will new staff be hired? Give the qualifications sought or job description. What will be the roles, and responsibilities of each (Who will do what?)? What percentage of time will each work? Do time to be spent and responsibilities match?

If consultants or sub-contractors are proposed for some work, describe what they will be doing, how much time, and qualifications they must meet to be hired.

Example: Sub-contractors with clean driving records and insurance will be hired to provide transportation for parents to attend child development classes once a month. ($15/hr x 25 hours). A subcontract will also be written for provision of child-care in a nearby childcare center while parents attend the evening classes at the project office. (3hrs per class x 2 classes per month x 12 months x $10 per hour = $720). You can add the amounts to the budget and calculation to budget narrative.

Evaluation Plan
Objectives and Their Relationship to Evaluation

Objective Type	Program Outcome	Evaluation Measure	Type of Evaluation
Administrative	Activities/skills Completed	Facilities, resources, materials, attendance # of program sessions, Also, benchmarks	Process asks: Was the program implemented as planned? What Happened in the Program?
Learner	Changes in know-ledge, awareness, attitudes or skills	Did these items increase?	Impact asks: How well did the program work? What effect did it have?
Behavior/ Environmental	Changes in behavior or environment	Was there a behavior change? Were barriers removed or reduced?	Impact asks: How well did the program work? What effect did it have?
Program	Change in health Status, school readiness, family function, systems improvement	measures and observations	Impact/outcome asks: What effect did it have?

Note: Process evaluation is a form of short-term evaluation. Impact evaluation is a form of long-term or outcome evaluation.

Project Benchmarks

Project Activities will be reported quarterly to the Children and Families Commission in the form of Benchmarks. Activities and Benchmarks do not necessarily measure programmatic outcomes, but they do provide a tracking mechanism to show progress toward the project's anticipated outcomes. Benchmarks are a type of process or short-term evaluation. They answer the questions "Was the program implemented as planned? What happened in the program?"

Examples of Benchmarks:

January 31, 2002
- Program coordinator has been hired.
- 1000 books for home libraries have been ordered

- Even Start has visited the library with four or more clients.

June 30, 2002

- Focus groups have provided input for mobile unit services and schedules.
- 75 parents have attended read-aloud activities, including two school parent groups; three care providers, one pregnant minor or adult school class.

Measurable Outcomes

Measurable outcomes are related to outcome objectives. There should be an evaluation plan for each outcome objective. There may be an evaluation form to use – one form is for each objective. Read the RFP carefully for details. Notice that some of the questions related to measurable outcomes are the same ones that were asked when developing objectives: What is the timeline, or When? How many individuals will be changed? What is the change that will be measured? **That is because outcome evaluation is linked to planned objectives.**

Other questions include:

- What tool will be used to measure the change?
- Who will collect and analyze the data?

Methods for evaluation include surveys, interviews, focus groups, or observation. Tools include the survey form, the interview form, the focus group questions, the observation form. The "forms" are carefully developed to make sure that the person doing the measuring can gather information in a consistent fashion, so the information from one group at one time can be compared to the same group at another time, and so the baseline survey results (before any planned activity) can be compared with the one after the activity is completed.

> Example: The project administrator will chart each K student's attendance for the first month of the school year. He/She will review the data with the committee. The administrator will chart each K student's attendance in the month after the home visits are completed and note whether or not the team was able to visit the parent. He/She will discuss whether attendance among parents who received visits compared to those that did not.

BUDGET AND BUDGET NARRATIVE

- **A BUDGET SHOWS HOW MUCH MONEY IT WILL COST TO PROVIDE THE SERVICES OUTLINED IN THE OBJECTIVES, ACTIVITIES, AND EVALUATION PLAN**. A budget consists of amounts of money listed under certain categories: Personnel (including benefits), Operating expenses (including rent, utilities, supplies, equipment, travel, training and conferences, consultants or subcontracts or other) and Indirect Expenses which may be the cost for people not listed in the budget doing some unglamorous-but-necessary behind-the-scenes work, such as payroll and audits.
- **The budget narrative is the thought process by which you arrived at the numbers listed in the budget**. It may be helpful to keep budge and narrative pages side-by-side as you draft your budget so that you don't forget how you arrived at the figures. Keep your

calculations in a folder, in case questions come up later about how the figures were calculated.

- If the project is for more than one year – or more than one fiscal year – then it will be required to break the budget figures down into how much will be spent each year. Read the RFP or Q&A documents carefully to determine how the budget is to be broken down.
- Carefully read to determine if the budget is to be for a calendar year (January – December) or fiscal year (July – June).
- Personnel. List all positions by exact job title (i.e., Pre-School Teacher, Bilingual Teacher II). Give the upper and lower salary ranges for that position – entry to top-of-scale. Give the percent of time the person will be working on the project. List the amount requested from this funding source. Example:

  A. Project Director $2800-$3200/mo 25% $9000 0 $9000.

  Budget Narrative: The project director is an experienced staff member at the 3rd step. $3000/month). The director will work 25% of her time on this project, 25% of $3000 = $750 per month x 12 months = $9,000. Benefits are 26%. ($9,000. x .26 = $2,340.)

- Matching funds are when the agency (or another funding source) pays part of the funds and part is requested in the proposal. Example:

Position Title	Salary Range	%FTE	Amount Requested	Matching Amounts	Total Budget
Bi-lingual teacher	$2200-2700/mo	100%	$16,200.	$16,200	$32,400.

Budget Narrative: An experienced bi-lingual teacher at the top step of the range will be assigned 100% to the project. Half of the salary will be funded under the project, and the other half by Pre-School Improvement funds from the JKL Foundation of San Francisco. The matching funds are available for the entire three years of the project.

- Operating Expenses should also be calculated for the same budget period.

	Amount Requested	Matching Amounts	Total Budget
Rent: $200/mo for 12 months	$1,200.	$1,200.	$2400

Budget Narrative: For the first year of the project the agency will contribute half of the $200/month already-low rent in the current building. Next year the program will move to a building nearer the target group. Rent will be increased, and it is likely that the entire amount will be charged to the project.

- Consultants and Sub-contractors' responsibilities should be spelled out. These categories are not listed in Personnel, because they do not receive benefits, but are independent contractors. Example:

	Amount Requested	Matching Amounts	Total Budget
Evaluation Consultant 70 hours x $70/hr	$4900.	0	$4900.

Budget Narrative: A private evaluation consultant will be hired to develop an evaluation plan for each objective. The consultant will develop evaluation tools, train staff in their use and in data entry, analyze data, prepare reports and make recommendations for program changes to improve outcomes.

- Indirect Expenses. Spell out what indirect expenses covers, such as personnel, accounting, payroll services, auditing, utilities, furniture, office space (if not included in operating expenses), building maintenance, information technology, etc. Indirect may also be an area where part of expense may be attributed to in-kind or matching donation. Indirect expenses may actually be 25%, but only 10% is charged to the grant, and 15% may be matching funds.
- Re-check number twice to be sure that columns add up for left to right, and top to bottom. Be sure that the amount does not exceed the total allowed in the RFP.
- Test your writing for readability.